

**City of Bloomington
Telecommunications Council
Business Meeting – March 1, 2011**

**Common Council Chambers
City Hall at the Showers Building
401 N. Morton St.**

I. Members Present: Jesse Strycker, Suzann Owen, Carl Zager, Duane Busick

II. Approval of Minutes:

- Suzann Owen moved to accept the minutes. Carl Zager seconded the motion. There were no additions. The only correction was that the (e) in Jesse's name was dropped a few times. or corrections.

III. Public Comment - None

IV. Reports and Announcements

1. Telecommunication Council Members:

- **Suzann** – In January, Eric Cook who represents the very southern party of Monroe County, also the Bedford State Representative. He introduced a bill that could have a potentially dramatic effect on Monroe County. The bill will eliminate video service franchise fees. Even though we have no authority over video service providers. The revenue earned by the video service providers is a great deal of concern to us. 50% of the cities and 50% of the counties video service fee's go to support community access television (CATS). Eric has submitted an amendment to his bill. Instead of getting rid of franchise fees all together, the bill states to study the possibility of eliminating the fees. The Committee, Utilities and Energy passed the bill with the amendment unanimously. There has been no action in the House of Representatives, so it has not gone to the Senate. This doesn't seem to be a priority item right now, but could be in the future. The reason for this is to level the playing field. Since people are accessing television in many different ways. Some video service providers like Dish do not have to pay franchise fees.
- **Duane** – The City of Richmond passed a resolution opposing Bill 1131. They would have lost major funding for their local television station. Also last week, there was an attempt made to strip Bill 1131 of its language and put in a manure bill in.
- **Jesse** –

Franchise payments:

Comcast

7/1 – 9/30 \$155,904.14

4/1 – 6/1 \$163,083.64

1/1 – 3/31 \$167,992.02

Total revenue for 2010 exceeds revenue from 2009

AT&T

7/1 – 9/30 \$41,350.01

4/1 – 6/1 \$ 37,858.49

1/1 – 3/31 \$35, 801.45

Total for AT & T \$115,009.95

Total for both Comcast and AT&T combined \$601,989.75 for the 3 quarters.

Duane – The reason for such increases is that the rates have gone up considerably.

Jesse - An update on the Comcast service visits that his parents were having. After being stood up three times, the fourth appointment someone did show up, he wasn't the person who was suppose to be there, they couldn't find that person who was suppose to be there. The person reviewed the work that needed to be done, and said an electrician should do it. Because no follow thru, parents have switched service to AT & T. Problems have been fixed. First impressions of AT&T have been very favorable.

2. ITS Dept. - No Report

3. CATS – Michael White

Annual Report

*Big increase in government channels

*Taped programming up

*Equipment checked-out up

*Equipment repairs – down

*won 8 awards

Duane – Do you have a breakdown on the programs that are done live?

Michael – No, but it is a great idea! We will start adding that category to the report.

Suzann – Can government meetings be viewed online?

Michael – Yes!

Suzann – How much is the internet streaming promoted?

Michael – Not near enough. We'll have a new website up in a few months and we do more of a push then.

January Monthly Report

*CATS began its 38th year of production.

*monthly programming listed

February Monthly Report

*monthly programming listed

Duane – What do you want to see for 2011?

Michael –

*conveyance of signal from city hall

*county \$150,000.00 for 3rd floor meeting room in the courthouse updates.

*outreach to the public

*discussion with WHHB bringing their public service programming over to CATS, partnership with public radio

4. WTIU – Joe Wren

*New television website

*WTIU World – features non-fiction documentary programming as well as series not in the WTIU schedule. Local exceptions:

- January's IN-Focus local new program was about Tolerance and Diversity.

- February's – Homelessness

- March – Volunteerism

*FTP system for the Indiana Channel Block is working well. It airs Tuesday and Thursday from 4-7pm on WTIU World.

Duane – Would you describe what the Indiana Channel Programming is?

Joe - It is a conglomerate of different PBS channels across the state contributing local content.

Suzann – Is across Indiana back in production?

Joe – I believe they had enough funding for 3 or 4 shows.

Jesse – I did not see weather announcements on .1, .2, .3, .4?

Joe – We got all this new equipment then had a drought in the weather till recently. We experimented with it but not too the point we were at. Once we get back that point, we should be able to double the speed for getting information out there. We are still relying on EAS systems to its initial trigger.

Carl – People need to have more than one way to find out about severe weather. Monroe County has a siren system but it is intended for people outside. If you want to be protected in the home, you need to purchase a NOAA weather radio. These radios can be programmed for alerts in specific geographic areas. The National Weather Service will be in Bloomington on Friday, March 4th to do their tornado and severe warning program. It will be at 7pm at the auditorium in the hospital.

Duane – Could you give a rundown of channels and where to find them in the line-up?

Joe –

Comcast HD 916, WTIU World 419, Create 305, HD 1022, Spanish 355

Each video service provider is different.

V. Information from or about Video Service Provider

Suzann – Showed a geographic map of how to locate the new office. New office address: 3374 W. 3rd Street. It is difficult to find on the website. The hours are Monday – Friday 9am-6pm, and Saturday 9am-1pm.

Jesse – Invited both video service providers to come and speak at the meetings.

VI. New Business

Carl – The community needs to begin to explore replacement sources of income to take place of video service provider's revenue.

Two reasons for doing this: 1.) the political climate on the video service provider revenue is going to be questioned each time the legislature come into session. 2.) Increase dis-satisfaction in the tie to cable distribution. Many are choosing different ways to receive their video. There are a number of possible replacement sources. We need to put together an initiative to work toward this.

Suzann – Wasn't this addressed to some degree in the strategic planning report? I think with no solutions.

Duane – It was in the report, but with CATS being a stand alone entity. The library has no plans to let CATS go. It is a valuable department within the library.

Suzann – The issue is still the same and the library will not be able to financially pick-up the lost franchise fees.

Jesse – I think communities would fight not to lose the franchise fees.

Carl – In exchange for franchise fees, Ellettsville/Monroe County, CATS provides coverage of meetings. CATS is doing meeting coverage in hope of (Michael please finish the sentence)

Michael – The franchise fees cover so much more then meetings. As we explore funding models, CATS and the library strive for neutrality. We run a 5 channel network for little over \$600,000 a year.

Jesse – We need to digest the thoughts, and keep the dialogue going next month.

VII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Suzann that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Jesse.

Next Regular Meeting

April 5th, 2011

Common Council Chambers in City Hall at the Showers Building

401 N. Morton St.

Submitted by:

Stephanie Jachim 3-10-2011